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Chairperson: Mr. Maurer ..... (Switzerland)

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09-43015 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

1. **The Chairperson** said he took it that the Commission wished to hold an open meeting, in accordance with its practice at previous meetings.

2. *It was so decided.*

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/3/BDI/4)

3. *The agenda was adopted.*

Adoption of the conclusions of the third biannual review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi (PBC/3/BDI/L.1)

4. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi), Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said that at each stage in the drafting process, the review had received input from all of the national and international stakeholders. It evaluated each strategic component and used the recommendations contained in the second progress report as a benchmark. By and large, partners had honoured their peacebuilding commitments.

5. The members of the independent national electoral commission had been appointed with the agreement of the national political parties. The commission had met several times with the Ministry of the Interior, political parties, civil society and the media. A United Nations delegation had travelled to Burundi in June 2008 to assist the electoral commission in evaluating its needs, and the United Nations system had established a strategic advisory committee and a technical coordination committee. The two committees had reached an agreement with the Ministry of Good Governance on a forum for political dialogue.

6. The effort to combat corruption was making steady progress. The institutional anti-corruption framework was almost complete. Some stakeholders felt that the process was slow, but it was important to bear in mind the logistical obstacles and, in some cases, the shortage of capacities. Legislation on public markets and the value-added tax was already in force, and the act establishing the Burundi Revenue Office had been promulgated.

7. All the provisions of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement had all been implemented. The problem posed by certain prisoners claiming rightly or wrongly to represent the Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL) remained to be resolved. Members of the police and the army from an FNL background needed to be integrated rapidly. Those ex-combatants who had not joined the defence and security forces needed to be sustainably reintegrated into society.

8. Army and police staff were receiving training in human rights, international humanitarian law and military law. A training course on security arrangements for the 2010 elections was already in place. A strategic plan for the development of the national intelligence services had been formulated, with a focus on respect for the rule of law. A weapons control law had been approved by the Council of Ministers and would be submitted to Parliament at the current session. A weapons decommissioning site was active, and large quantities of weapons and ammunition continued to be voluntarily handed over to the authorities.

9. The revised draft law establishing the Independent National Commission on Human Rights had incorporated the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (the Paris Principles), and would soon be examined by the Council of Ministers. The liberation of prisoners of conscience had showed that the justice system was operating without interference. Although certain issues would require additional time and resources, the recent verdict against the killing of albinos demonstrated that impunity was being combated.

10. A programme of sustainable socio-economic reintegration was being finalized. A peacebuilding project was being organized with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist war victims in Cibitoke, Bubanza and Bujumbura provinces; the lessons learned would help formulate the nationwide programme. A private-sector development strategy addressing tourism and arts and crafts was also being prepared.

11. The land policy paper adopted by the Council of Ministers in April 2009 provided for the inventory of State-owned land and the decentralization of land management, and outlined lasting solutions to land shortage and the problems of the landless. The mandate of the Commission on Land and Other Assets was to be extended for two years, and the amended version of the relevant Act would further clarify the Commission's

powers as compared with those of other Government agencies. Integrated rural villages continued to be built for landless returnees and internally displaced persons. In the same way, the peace villages were helping to restore trust between the local authorities and communities, and above all among the inhabitants of the villages. In the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Sectoral Group on Community Recovery would assist in planning stakeholder action. Efforts were being made to ensure that women accounted for 30 per cent of the public-sector workforce. Women's organizations were working to increase female participation in the 2010 elections.

12. The Regional Initiative for Peace in Burundi and the South African Facilitation had both played decisive roles in brokering the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement. Burundi was now participating in the security coordination mechanisms within the East African Community, and in peacekeeping operations throughout the continent. Further progress had been made in relaunching the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) had organized a workshop on combating the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Burundi had joined the East African Customs Union and adopted the common external tariff. The Partners Coordination Group had continued to be active, as had the 13 sectoral groups of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

13. In January 2009, the completion of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, had eased Burundi's debt burden: that would enable it to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Unfortunately, the drafting of the national report on aid flows had shown imbalances between national programming and commitments under the Priority Action Programme and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The promotion of equitable and sustainable growth was clearly underfunded.

14. Moreover, the support pledged by donors was subject to new conditionalities which made them unpredictable, compromising the realization of Government targets. The Government was therefore concerned that the global financial crisis might affect official development assistance, and anxious to ensure greater coherence between the political processes affecting the consideration of peacebuilding in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

15. Mechanisms to implement the recommendations adopted were already in place. However, they would require greater human, financial and material resources. He therefore called on the Peacebuilding Commission to redouble its efforts to mobilize the necessary resources to organize the 2010 elections and consolidate the progress achieved in implementing the Strategy Paper. Despite the constraints intrinsic to the post-conflict situation, his Government would contribute its share.

16. The Government had already acted on the recommendations. In certain cases, greater time would be needed in order to raise the necessary resources, or to undertake a process of national dialogue and build consensus. One example was the case of certain forms of social behaviour that were now criminalized by the Penal Code. Another was the law on inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts. Those issues would remain on the Government's agenda. However, the need for additional time should not serve as a pretext for partners to compromise the process of peacebuilding and economic recovery.

17. **Ms. Keita** (Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB)), speaking via video link from Bujumbura, said that a year after the first follow-up report on the Strategic Framework for Peace Consolidation, Burundi had made tremendous progress.

18. Burundi was currently undergoing three complex processes, namely, demilitarizing and reintegrating members of FNL, holding national consultations on transitional justice mechanisms, and organizing support for the electoral process. The Demilitarization of FNL was in its most delicate stage, that of socio-economic reintegration of over 35,000 ex-combatants and associated adults, a difficult process further complicated by the immediate reintegration needs of over 200,000 returnees and displaced persons, in a weakened economy. In that connection, the recent establishment of the Community Recovery Cluster was a decisive step, as it brought together all national and international partners to tackle the reintegration process.

19. She hoped that United Nations support to Burundian partners would facilitate the establishment of solid institutions capable of meeting the needs of the citizenry. That said, maintaining a lasting peace would entail not merely ensuring the absence of war, but also

creating an environment conducive to respect for human rights, social justice, harmony and stability. Having recently become a member of the East African Community, Burundi would be better equipped to confront the major humanitarian, economic, political and security challenges it faced.

20. She was confident that the successful holding of free, fair and transparent elections would hinge on the use of dialogue as the primary means of peace consolidation, a task incumbent upon the Government and people of Burundi, and in particular those stakeholders who had taken on a political and institutional role, such as State authorities, political parties, civil society, the private sector and religious confessions. In addition, support for such electoral mechanisms as the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) was essential.

21. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the Movement welcomed the conclusions of the third biannual review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi, along with all efforts by the Government, civil society, women's organizations, BINUB and political parties, among others, aimed at strengthening the peace process. However, while significant progress had been achieved towards the demobilization of ex-combatants and nationwide consultations on transitional justice, a great deal of work remained, and the Movement stood ready to assist in any way possible in ensuring timely implementation of the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission.

22. The Non-Aligned Movement called for a holistic approach that emphasized the peace and development nexus, as such an approach would address the socio-economic issues and challenges that remained a source of discontent to the population of Burundi. Noting the absence of references to the development agenda in the review's conclusions, he affirmed the need to focus attention on that agenda in order to place the country on a secure path to sustainable economic recovery. Lastly, he expressed appreciation for the role of the donor community in assisting Burundi to face many post-conflict challenges, especially in light of the impact of the global economic and food crisis, and urged those who had made pledges at the 2007 Donor Roundtable Conference on Burundi to honour them.

23. **Mr. Sangqu** (South Africa) said that his Government welcomed the progress achieved to date in demilitarizing FNL, particularly child ex-combatants. His Government would continue to support the peacebuilding process through the newly established Partnership for Peace in Burundi. He hoped that the recommendations of the third biannual review of the Strategic Framework would be implemented.

24. His Government was convinced of the importance of national ownership in the peacebuilding process, and would continue to support efforts aimed at ensuring that the people of Burundi remained central in that process. Furthermore, partnerships between the Burundian Government and all relevant organizations must be strengthened.

25. **Mr. Bugingo Rugema** (Rwanda) said that the third interim report of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi attested to the laudable efforts of the Government of Burundi and its regional and international partners to achieve the goals set forth in the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategy. His Government welcomed the progress achieved in the Burundi peace process, and remained committed to supporting the initiatives under way. Rwanda had been providing training to the Burundi National Defence Forces through its defence cooperation programme, and was also assisting the Government of Burundi in improving political and economic governance through existing bilateral agreements between the two countries.

26. Of the US$ 35 million earmarked for Burundi through the Peacebuilding Fund, a significant portion had been allocated to various programmes that had contributed to the progress outlined in the third biannual review. His Government called on the international community to scale up contributions to the Fund to ensure that that progress was sustained.

27. Rwanda would continue to support the peacebuilding process by fostering political dialogue, regional trade and economic integration alongside other member States of regional organizations.

28. **Mr. Vanden Bulcke** (Belgium) said that the laudable progress made in the peace process, the establishment of CENI and the beginning of consultations on transitional justice attested to the Burundian Government's commitment to peacebuilding. Belgium was paying particular attention to three areas of peacebuilding, namely the conclusion of the peace process, the 2010 elections and efforts to combat impunity and corruption. Concerning the first, his

Government encouraged the parties to pursue their efforts to finalize the peace process, with the support of the Partnership for Peace in Burundi. With regard to the second, Belgium supported the Commission's recommendation to the Government to create a climate favourable to free, fair and peaceful elections, and, in particular, to guarantee respect for the political liberties and physical integrity of all citizens. The Government should also maintain dialogue with the opposition, pay particular attention to civil society initiatives and respect the essential role of democratically elected institutions and the mandate and independence of CENI. On the fight against corruption and impunity, progress in the investigation into the assassination of the Vice-President of the Observatory for the Fight against Corruption and Misappropriation of Funds (OLUCOME), Mr. Ernest Manirumwa, would demonstrate the extent to which the Government was genuinely committed to combating both ills.

29. Belgium's direct support for the Burundian Government, including, inter alia, financing the construction of the Rubira site for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), training police and army officers, and donating €2 million to the World Bank single country trust fund in support of demobilization efforts. Moreover, it had pledged to disburse an additional €2 million to the electoral process once the Trust Fund was establishe[1] His Government would maintain its efforts at their current level through the bilateral cooperation plan for 2010-2013. In accordance with the Paris Principles, Belgium was presently studying how to confine its contributions to fewer areas in order to maximize benefits in each.

30. **Ms. Hendrie** (United Kingdom) said that the biannual report made it apparent that significant progress had been made in a number of areas, chief among them the peace process. While the new Penal Code contained a number of very positive aspects, such as the abolition of the death penalty, they were unfortunately overshadowed by the measures criminalizing same-sex relations. Her delegation was encouraged by the progress made on regional integration; it welcomed the launching of the East African Community Customs Union in Burundi, and stressed the need for reforms in order to reap the benefits of such integration.

31. Guaranteeing civil liberties, granting full freedom of the press and of association, and adopting a zero-tolerance policy towards violence would be crucial to creating the right political environment ahead of the 2010 elections and thereby consolidating Burundi's success story. The Commission would have to consider how best to support the recommendations made by the recent United Nations needs assessment mission for the 2010 elections and how support for elections could best be mobilized.

32. There was a need to improve the flow of information between formal reviews, and her Government therefore approved the idea of establishing a local Commission platform in Burundi. The new platform must fit with the Partners' Coordination Group and the Partnership for Peace in Burundi in order to ensure complementarity of operation.

33. **Ms. Barankeba** (civil society), speaking via video link from Bujumbura, said that Burundian civil society organizations welcomed the inclusive nature of the peace consolidation process and noted with pleasure the encouraging advances such as the establishment of CENI, the existence of a forum for political dialogue, the adoption of the new Penal Code and the accelerated implementation of the agreement between the Government and FNL.

34. Nevertheless, civil society deplored a number of repressive Government measures and other instances of poor governance, including the imposition of unjustified restrictions on the rights of political parties and civil society organizations; the high number of weapons in circulation among the population; insufficient punishment of violent crimes committed against women; and the absence of a national framework to assist victims of violence. Civil society and women's organizations therefore urged the Government, inter alia, to accelerate the adoption and enactment of the electoral code and to integrate the principle of gender equality into electoral quotas as provided for by that code; to grant particular and sustained attention to the reintegration of ex-combatants and to potential conflicts between returnees and residents; to address the need to establish new and to strengthen existing basic social services for women; and to move rapidly towards adopting the law on successions, matrimonial regimes and gifts so as to put an end to existing discrimination with regard to access to land.

35. Lastly, Burundian civil society called upon the international community to provide the Government with meaningful technical and financial assistance in preparing free, peaceful and transparent elections; to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) and the strategic plan to combat violence against women; to ensure the establishment of effective transitional justice mechanisms; and to support peace consolidation and national reconstruction efforts by all parties, including disarmament of the civilian population and full reintegration of ex-combatants.

36. **Mr. Bah** (African Union), speaking via video link from Bujumbura, said that it was incumbent upon the Government and people of Burundi to ensure a smooth transition from the peace process to the electoral process. He urged the political classes, civil society, the Bashingantahe institution and the Government of Burundi to exert every effort to that end. In addition, the consensus reached during the establishment of CENI, and the recourse to dialogue and consultation in general, must prevail over unilateralism, in order for Burundi to attain the economic and social development and the democracy to which its people aspired. For its part, the African Union would continue to support Burundi's peacebuilding efforts.

37. **Mr. Mndolwa** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking by video link from Bujumbura on behalf of the Regional Initiative for Peace in Burundi, said that the Initiative, which had begun in 1996, had been successful thanks to the support of the international community, while Burundi had received both financial and moral support from the African Union and the European Union. Further efforts should be made, and cooperation and understanding extended, to consolidate the peace that had been achieved.

38. The Government of Burundi had shown commendable leadership in following up on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, while BINUB had provided exemplary technical support, thereby restoring hope and confidence to what had been a war-torn country suffering from poverty, disease, ignorance and lawlessness, with its infrastructure in ruins. Those ills, which were found in other developing countries, could be counteracted through good governance. The strategies that the Peacebuilding Commission had deployed in Burundi — in particular the mobilization of financing and the coordination of United Nations agencies — could be applied with similar success to developing countries emerging not only from conflict but also from colonialism. The United Nations had been created to end war, but wars would always exist if no solution was found to the challenges facing developing countries.

39. **Mr. Smets** (Belgium), speaking by video link from Bujumbura on behalf of the European Union, said that the discussions at the political forum held in Bujumbura the previous week, while not always representing consensus, had been open and thorough. The peace process with FNL had been very successful, with several European partners making financial contributions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

40. The European Union was also willing to provide financial support for the electoral process. The Burundian authorities had shown their willingness to engage in dialogue with all stakeholders, including the international community. Their aim during the electoral process should be to achieve maximum consensus while guaranteeing the independence of the electoral commission and the political freedom and physical integrity of individuals. It would be important to ensure that young people and those who had been demobilized were not used as instruments of propaganda.

41. In the area of justice, priority should be given to investigating the murder of Mr. Manirumva. Police reform should continue, particularly given the important role the police would play in the electoral process. Many European partners were committed to supporting capacity-building in the justice system.

42. On international aid, the European Union was committed under the Paris and Accra Declarations, although it did not agree with the statement that budget support pledged by donors was subject to conditionalities, since political dialogue was often part of the arrangement between donors and recipients.

43. **Mr. Jarasch** (Germany) said that good progress had been achieved by the Government of Burundi with the support of donors. While the conclusions and recommendations of the report (PBC/3/BDI/L.1) provided a valuable indication of the way ahead, it would be useful to underpin general recommendations with more concrete benchmarking provisions for the following reporting period. His delegation also wished to take up the question of coordination between Peacebuilding Commission structures in New York and

Commission members on the ground, as close coordination was essential for the effective implementation of the recommendations. Germany had demonstrated its commitment to the peace process in Burundi through its contributions to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the police and ICGLR, and would consider providing support for the upcoming elections.

44. **Ms. Hulan** (Canada) said that the support of the Regional Initiative and the establishment of the Partnership for Peace had buttressed reconciliation and facilitated the disarmament and demobilization of FNL and its conversion into a political party. Her delegation applauded the removal of the death penalty from the Criminal Code.

45. Burundi was entering a new phase of peace consolidation in which democratic institutions must become entrenched; the 2010 elections would be an important test of that process. The National Independent Electoral Commission must be strong so as to ensure free, fair, inclusive and transparent elections. Furthermore, transforming an armed group into a political party was not an easy process. Ex-combatants must be demobilized, disarmed and reintegrated as quickly as possible, with due regard for the particular needs of women and children.

46. Canada also looked to Burundi to further combat corruption and ensure accountability through the transparency of investigations, including the investigation into the murder of Mr. Manirumva. It was, furthermore, important to continue upholding human rights for all; in that regard, recent legislation criminalizing homosexuality was a cause for concern.

47. **Ms. de Montlaur** (France) said that the recent disarmament and reintegration of FNL and the release of child soldiers from their ranks represented extraordinary advances in the Burundi peace process, in which South Africa had played a decisive role. The participation of the Peacebuilding Commission in that process was a signal achievement for the United Nations.

48. A number of challenges remained, including full disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, respect for human rights and political and civil freedoms, the protection of minorities, and economic and social development. Her delegation hoped that the Criminal Code would be amended to decriminalize homosexuality. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Partnership for Peace launched in May 2009, which represented the international community as a whole, would be crucial in providing Burundi the sustained assistance it would require to consolidate the peace process.

49. The general elections scheduled for 2010 were the main challenge currently facing Burundi; their success would require a strong Independent Electoral Commission. The Government of Burundi had asked the Secretary-General for the moral, technical, logistical and financial support of the United Nations. She looked forward to the outcome of the needs assessment mission, which would allow the Burundi configuration to decide how best to assist with organization of the elections.

50. **Ms. Enge** (Norway) welcomed the progress made by the Government of Burundi and FNL in the peace process, including the disarming and demobilization of many ex-combatants and the accreditation of FNL as a political party. Good work had been done to prepare for the elections, including the appointment of a National Independent Electoral Commission, which should quickly become fully operational to ensure a free, fair and peaceful election process. Moreover, the Government should increase its efforts to guarantee freedom of assembly, political debate and the press. Norway would support stronger mechanisms for dialogue between the Government of Burundi and civil society. Her delegation also wished to have further detail on the UNDP basket fund for support to the electoral process.

51. Combating corruption was paramount for long-term development and stability. To that end, the Government should expedite the settlement of cases currently before the courts and strengthen governmental and non-governmental organizations that fought corruption. All efforts should be made to conclude successfully the investigation of the murder of Mr. Manirumva. The police should also take decisive action on violence against women and should stop making arrests on insufficient grounds, particularly of journalists and politicians.

52. Because women were particularly vulnerable in conflict, it was essential that they be included in peacebuilding and play a central role in decision-making institutions. Norway would continue to support projects that enhanced gender mainstreaming in the

peacebuilding process and combated violence against women.

53. **Mr. Beer** (United States of America) said that developments in disarmament and demobilization, security sector reform and preparations for the 2010 elections were especially welcome, but that human rights in Burundi remained a concern, most notably the risks faced by those committed to fighting corruption and the inclusion of provisions in the Criminal Code criminalizing homosexual acts. Nevertheless, his Government remained committed to the Partnership for Peace for Burundi and would continue to seek ways to support both Burundi and the Peacebuilding Commission in achieving their shared goals.

54. **Mr. Bonkoungou** (Burkina Faso) said that efforts to support the Burundian Government and civil and political stakeholders in the peace process should continue unabated. He welcomed the Peacebuilding Commission's approval of urgent funding from the Peacebuilding Fund in support of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

55. His delegation was pleased that a positive political climate had been developing with the appointment of the National Independent Electoral Commission. It was important to maintain dialogue among all political stakeholders in order to maintain the stability of Burundian society and civil institutions and to pave the way for democratic elections. The United Nations was responding commendably to the Government's requests for assistance in organizing the elections. Burkina Faso urged the Burundian Government, as the peace process advanced, to establish a transitional justice mechanism that would result in true national reconciliation.

56. Despite the significant success achieved, the international community must not slacken its provision of assistance, particularly at a time of economic crisis. The Burundi configuration must continue implementing projects on democratic governance, judicial and security sector reform, human rights promotion and community development. Efforts must also continue to reintegrate former FNL combatants into civil society.

57. **Ms. Mulamula** (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region), speaking by video link from Bujumbura, said that the Government of Burundi and all stakeholders were to be congratulated on the successes achieved to date in the peacebuilding process, but that much remained to be done to consolidate the peace. There was marked thematic convergence in the work of ICGLR and the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. Ongoing attention must be given to justice and security sector reform, completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, gender issues and gender-based violence, land for returnees, and above all democracy, good governance and poverty alleviation.

58. The elections scheduled for 2010 would be a litmus test for the sustainability of the peace process and would therefore require the support of the international community. The Peacebuilding Commission should seize the opportunity to foster dialogue between the Government and political parties to resolve outstanding issues and should provide the Independent Electoral Commission with the capacity needed to carry out its mandate effectively.

59. ICGLR provided a regional framework for the exchange of good practices among member States in the region and participated in such joint actions as coordinating the return of refugees and combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Government of Burundi had been steadfast in meeting its obligations as a signatory of the Pact on Peace, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region and, in particular, its Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, but would nevertheless require sustained support.

60. **Ms. Tembon** (Representative in Burundi of the World Bank), speaking via video link from Bujumbura, welcomed the opportunity given to key stakeholders in the peacebuilding process to contribute to the third biannual review. Effective communication and inclusive dialogue among all those involved at national level was essential to building confidence and therefore consolidating peace. Continued national leadership and international support were required, as major challenges remained despite the substantial achievements during the period covered by the review.

61. The World Bank Country Assistance Strategy, based on Burundi's Poverty Reduction Strategy, supported the transition from a post-conflict economy to a developing economy. The related Emergency Demobilization and Transitional Reintegration Project would support Government efforts to demobilize, and

provide socio-economic assistance for, demobilized members of FNL and the FNL dissident groups and others demobilized under earlier DDR efforts. It would focus on disabled ex-combatants, women and children.

62. **Mr. Otobo** (Officer-in-Charge, Peacebuilding Support Office) said that the involvement of the United Nations in the peacebuilding process in Burundi was a learning experience. Burundi was the first State to have associated with it a country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the first State to have a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding formalizing the partnership between it, the Peacebuilding Commission and other stakeholders in the consolidation of peace. It was therefore a model for national ownership and leadership of the peacebuilding process. BINUB had also played a vital role in improving the situation in the country.

63. After substantial progress in the previous year, the peacebuilding process had reached a critical stage and must be supported by further resources from the international community. In addition, as the Secretary-General had indicated in section VI of his report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (A/63/881), the Peacebuilding Commission should consider enhancing its advisory role by focusing attention on peacekeeping priorities, encouraging the supply of resources to improve national capacities, monitoring the implementation of national peacebuilding strategies and promoting coherence and synergy within and outside the United Nations system.

64. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi), Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said that the commitment of the people of Burundi to living in peace had never been in doubt. The ethnic polarization and conflict that had affected their lives in the years since independence had been caused by poor governance, particularly in the administration of justice. Only better governance would ensure that the considerable achievements of the peacebuilding process were sustainable, and that democracy could endure.

65. Despite the goodwill and commitment of the population, and the country's desire to affirm its sovereignty and ownership of peacebuilding and reconstruction, resources and capacity were limited and must be strengthened. The support of the United Nations and the international community was welcome, but all stakeholders, including those in civil society, should play their part, as the State could not achieve everything on its own. The suggestion that the Government should consider establishing a local platform to represent the Peacebuilding Commission had not in the end been taken up, not because it was considered undesirable, but because other structures existed to help to drive the peacebuilding process forward, chief among them the Partnership for Peace for Burundi.

66. Turning to the comments made by the members of the country-specific configuration regarding the shocking murder of Mr. Manirumva, he emphasized that the Government had not just mobilized the Burundi police and armed forces, but had also sought the assistance of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to conduct a thorough investigation. The Government did not intend to rush the investigation, for fear of prejudging its outcome.

67. With regard to the comments regarding human rights, he urged a focus on the many positive aspects of the recently promulgated Penal Code, including abolition of the death penalty and the establishment of measures to counter violence against women and children, rather than on the single section of it that criminalized homosexual acts. That section targeted only 20 individuals out of a population of 8 million, and would probably be eliminated if the general thinking in Burundian society changed. It should be remembered that the Code had been adopted by the national parliament. In his view, contemplating an interruption of the flow of resources to the country because of disapproval of one section of the Penal Code would unfairly disadvantage the entire population.

68. Referring to the comments of the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, he said that development efforts were indeed important, but would require time to implement. He welcomed the development financing already provided by the United Nations and hoped that the pledges of assistance made at the Donor Round-table Conference in 2007 would be honoured in a way which imposed as few conditionalities as possible, as such conditionalities inevitably caused the flow of resources to become sporadic.

69. **The Chairperson** said he took it that the members of the Burundi configuration wished to adopt the conclusions of the third biannual review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi (PBC/3/BDI/L.1).

70. *It was so decided.*

71. **The Chairperson** said that it was essential to focus on Burundi's path to peace and sustainable socio-economic development. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission was to support the peacebuilding process, keeping the international community's attention on it and ensuring that the necessary resources were mobilized. The current review arrangements demanded a great deal of work, particularly from the Burundian stakeholders, and he favoured a less demanding structure. He hoped that the Peacebuilding Commission would work with the World Bank, in the context of the next Poverty Reduction Strategy review, to harmonize and simplify the daunting number of frameworks, strategies, action programmes and related reports.

72. Whether the local representation of the Peacebuilding Commission was termed a "local platform" or was known by some other name was less relevant than its function, which was to provide a pragmatic and flexible means of dialogue and coordination, unhampered by procedure and protocol, and able to adapt to discussing different subjects. The immediate priority should remain the 2010 elections, which had the potential to place Burundi on the list of peacebuilding successes. Another vital priority was to complete the sustainable reintegration of former rebel combatants, demobilized soldiers and returning refugees and internally displaced persons. With those priorities in mind, he hoped that the country-specific configuration would take the opportunity to meet and engage in dialogue with senior officials from Burundi when they attended the high-level debates associated with the beginning of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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